

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 153115

LONDON FOR VEST, AGGREY, LUERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, SHUM, RO

SUBJECT: HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON ROMA-
NIAN TRADE AGREEMENT AND MFN

1. ALTHOUGH DEPARTMENT WILL BE PROVIDING TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF LENGTHY HEARINGS HELD THIS MORNING (JUNE 15) IN TRADE SUBCOMMITTEE OF HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE, AND WILL BE POUCHING COPIES OF VOLUMINOUS TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY THE 24 WITNESSES WHO APPEARED, WE WISH FIRST TO PROVIDE EMBASSY WITH REPORT ON THREE SENSITIVE ISSUES FROM HEARINGS WHICH MAY BE RAISED IN BUCHAREST. THESE ARE: THE RAUTA CASE, US INTERVENTION IN EMIGRATION TO THIRD COUNTRIES, AND PROPOSAL THAT EMBASSY MONITOR EMIGRATION OF ROMANIAN JEWS TO ISRAEL BY INVESTIGATING REAL INTEREST WITHIN JEWISH COMMUNITY.

2. RAUTA CASE - DURING TESTIMONY BY CONGRESSMAN CHRISTOPHER
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DODD, WHICH WAS EXTREMELY CRITICAL OF ROMANIAN EMIGRATION PERFORMANCE, CASE OF CONSTANTIN RAUTA WAS DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH. DODD SAID THAT SINCE 1975 HE HAD BEEN TRYING TO ASSIST RAUTA IN HAVING HIS WIFE AND CHILD JOIN HIM IN THE UNITED STATES. VANIK PICKED UP ON THIS COMMENT AND SAID THAT HIS SUBCOMMITTEE HAS DONE ABOUT ALL IT CAN ON THE RAUTA CASE. HE POINTED OUT THAT RAUTA HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF CEAU-

SESCU'S ENTOURAGE DURING THE ROMANIAN PRESIDENT'S VISIT HERE IN 1973 AND THAT HE HAD DEFECTED WITH THE DIPLOMATIC POUCH. THIS MADE THE RAUTA DIVIDED-FAMILY CASE BOTH UNUSUAL AND EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. VANIK ASKED RHETORICALLY, "HOW WOULD AMERICANS FEEL IF ONE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S AIDES HAD DEFECTED WITH THE DIPLOMATIC POUCH DURING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT ABROAD?" (DODD OPINED THAT WE WOULD NEVERTHELESS NOT PREVENT THE FAMILY FROM BEING REUNITED.) VANIK THEN OBSERVED THAT IF WE GET VERY INVOLVED IN A CASE THAT BORDERS ON TREASON, WE COULD BE JEOPARDIZING ROMANIAN COOPERATION WITH THE THOUSANDS OF OTHER "CLEAN CASES". VANIK ASSURED DODD THAT HE WAS VERY SYMPATHETIC TO RAUTA AND HOPED THAT SOME "THIRD COUNTRY SOLUTION" MIGHT BE FOUND. HOWEVER, HE NOTED, THE SUBCOMMITTEE HAS JUST ABOUT REACHED THE POINT OF FUTILITY IN THIS CASE. THE RAUTA CASE WAS RAISED AGAIN BY A PRIVATE WITNESS, MRS. BIGIO, AND VANIK RESPONDED TO HER EMOTIONAL PLEA TO REUNITE THE RAUTA FAMILY BY SAYING THAT HE HAD PERSONALLY DISCUSSED THE CASE WITH HIGH OFFICIALS OF THE ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT AND WAS STILL HOPEFUL THAT A SOLUTION COULD BE WORKED OUT.

3. USG INTERVENTION FOR EMIGRATION TO THIRD COUNTRIES - REPRESENTATIVE DODD'S TESTIMONY ALSO URGED GREATER US GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR ROMANIANS SEEKING TO EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL. IN RESPONSE, VANIK STATED THAT THE SUBCOMMITTEE

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HAD TRIED FOR SOME TIME TO HELP OUT ROMANIANS TRYING TO EMIGRATE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, BUT HAD CONCLUDED THAT IT COULD HANDLE ONLY THOSE CASES WHERE THE DESTINATION WAS THE UNITED STATES. (HOWEVER, IN RESPONSE TO LATER TESTIMONY, VANIK SEEMED TO QUALIFY THIS BY OFFERING TO FOLLOW-UP ON CASES INVOLVING EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL.)

4. EMBASSY MONITORING OF EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL - CYRUS ABBE, WHO SHARPLY CRITICIZED GOR HARASSMENT OF ROMANIAN JEWS SEEKING TO EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL, RECOMMENDED THAT THE US GOVERNMENT INSTITUTE AN "EFFECTIVE" MONITORING SYSTEM WHICH PARALLELED ITS CURRENT INTERVENTION IN CASES OF EMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES. NOTING THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE PROBLEM EXTENSIVELY WITH THE EMBASSY DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO ROMANIA, HE CRITICIZED EMBASSY AND DEPARTMENT POLICY OF REFUSING TO INTERVENE WITH THE MFA ON APPLICANTS TO ISRAEL. HE PROPOSED THAT THE EMBASSY HAVE A MEMBER OF ITS STAFF VISIT THE ROMANIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY TO DETERMINE THE TRUE SITUATION REGARDING INTEREST IN EMIGRATION; ON THE BASIS OF THIS INVESTIGATION THE EMBASSY WOULD PROVIDE THESE NAMES TO THE MFA AND AT THE SAME TIME INFORM THE CONGRESS. IN THIS WAY, POTENTIAL EMIGRANTS WOULD KNOW

THAT THE USG WAS SOLIDLY BEHIND THEIR APPLICATION AND WOULD
SUPPORT IT WITH THE GOR. (ALTHOUGH THIS RECOMMENDATION

WAS MADE BY A PRIVATE CITIZEN AND WAS NOT IN ANY WAY SUP-
PORTED BY VANIK, IN LIGHT OF OBVIOUS GOR SENSITIVITY TO
SUCH A PROPOSAL WE FLAG IT TO YOUR ATTENTION.) CHRISTOPHER

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